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# SOCIAL SERVICE.

ANTI-MORMON SERIES.

# METHODS

of

# Mormon Missionaries

by

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LEAGUE FOR SOCIAL SERVICE,
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D—I.
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# METHODS OF MORMON MISSIONARIES.

SINCE the Mormons have been increasing at such a great ratio the past few years, it is interesting and important to know the secret of this phenomenal growth.

My twelve years' study of Mormonism, while laboring in the capacity of a Christian missionary among the Mormon people in Utah, together with several months' experience with the Mormon missionaries who were making "converts" in various parts of our country outside of Utah, noting their methods and their success, has convinced the writer that Mormonism grows neither because of its merits as a system of moral or religious truth, nor alone by appealing to the depravity of the human heart.

If Mormon missionaries were honest enough to begin their efforts with those whom they would "convert" by telling the real truth about Mormon doctrines and practices, they would not make a single convert among decent and intelligent people; but having been trained in the school of de-

ception from their earliest infancy, they come into the homes of unsuspecting people to lead them into the same false ways in which they have been reared. It is perfectly consistent for them to practice all sorts of cunning and deception, as their god and their prophets and their teachers have set them abundant examples in these lines from the beginning. If the reader chooses to make a careful study of Mormonism by following up the reading of this leaflet with a careful study of the entire series of which this is the beginning, he will find that this statement is not any too strong, however extravagant it may seem to him at first.

Let no one, however, imagine for a moment that the writer means to leave the impression that the Mormon missionaries are not sincere in their faith. If they were not sincere, they could not succeed, as they do, in making proselytes; but, being sincere, they believe with all their hearts, because they are so trained, that the end justifies the means, and that any sort of deception is justifiable, if it only helps to "win converts and save souls," as they understand.

When Mormon missionaries come into a new community, they do not sound a trumpet before them, as they have found out by long experience that this does not pay. They often are in a community for some time before they make themselves generally known. Finding Christian people off their guard, they "spy out the land" and find out all they can about the condition of local church

life, who are professing Christians and who are not, how consistent are the lives of those who are church members, who are lukewarm and indifferent. As a rule, they find little difficulty in proselyting those who are weak in the faith, or dissatisfied with their present church relations.

When they are ready to "work" or to "tract" a community, they generally plan to visit systematically from house to house, aiming to call at least three times at each house at short intervals of a day or a week or two, depending somewhat upon circumstances and upon the degree of interest or repugnance manifested by the persons visited.

On the first visit they aim to leave a tract suited to the "state of mind" the person may be in, provided they have had an opportunity to ascertain what that "state of mind" is. If the way is open they will make a "friendly call," or even an extended visit, upon a person before presenting the tract. There are generally two of them, as they aim to go two by two, "as the seventies in the days of the Saviour." The principal aim in this first call or visit is to make themselves agreeable and "become acquainted," to "gain the confidence" of the proposed "converts." If the Mormon "elders" or missionaries were to call upon you and find you off your guard, they would make themselves so agreeable that you would be made to feel that they were about the most pleasant fellows that you have ever met. They would talk

you for not feeling at home in a church where such things exist. We should not feel at home in such a church ourselves. These things are but so many proofs that the church of which you speak is not the Church of Christ. In the Church of Christ, all the members are brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus; and one person is just as good as another, no matter whether he has fine clothes or as much money or not." They will quote from the Bible some such passage as the following: "The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the maker of them all," to prove to you that your church is out of harmony with the Bible and therefore not the true church. If these "elders" were honest with you, they would tell you there are greater class distinctions in their church than in any other; but they leave this for you to learn for yourself and to your sorrow after they have converted you to their faith.

Possibly the Mormon "elders" may leave you at this point and put into your hands a tract to show you how far the churches of to-day have drifted away from the ancient simplicity which characterized the New Testament Church; or, if the way seems open, they may go right on with the conversation until they have made you feel that you have found in them the best friends you ever had. You may then ask them who they are; and they will probably answer: "We are Christian missionaries. We are here to do all the good we can free of charge. We travel without purse or

scrip,' just as the seventies in the days of Christ. In fact we are seventies chosen just as the ancient seventies were, and are upon the same kind of mission that they were called to fulfill. If we can give you any advice we shall be glad to do it, but we cannot advise you to continue going to such a church, or listening to such a minister as you have been telling us about, for they are evidently not truly Christian." Possibly they will also by this time have repeated that claim about travelling "without purse or scrip," and that they as the servants of God are depending upon the generosity of the people among whom they labor for support while engaged in their mission work, so you will feel like inviting them to dine with you, or even to make their home at your house while in your neighborhood. At any rate, they will manage to talk with you, if you will let them, again and again, until in each case they have reached a good point at which to leave you with a tract which will follow up and "clinch" what they have said to you in conversation.

The substance of what they will give you in these conversations and in these tracts is as follows:

At the proper time, as it seems to them, they will say: "We are missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (thereby misleading all who have never happened to hear the Mormon Church called by this euphonious name). "We believe in the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the

same as all other Christians do" (thereby leaving the impression that they believe in the orthodox doctrine of the trinity, which they do not). "We believe in the Bible as the Word of God, given by divine inspiration" (never intimating that they believe in other Scriptures that are later and "better adapted to these times" than the Bible). "We hold some views which are a little different from the views held by other denominations; but we do not ask any one to believe anything which we cannot prove by this Bible (holding up the Bible)." In all their preliminary instructions they take care to begin in such a way as to keep unsuspecting Christian people from seeing the divergence of Mormonism from Christianity, and to proceed in such a way that when the divergence afterward appears, it will seem to the ordinary mind so slight as to be immaterial. The following is the substance of what they will say as they proceed:

"We believe that faith is the first principle of the Gospel." They follow this statement by elaborate quotations of Scripture to show that faith is necessary to salvation, without intimating that their definition of faith is entirely different from that of Christian people.

They then continue by saying: "We believe that repentance is the second principle of the Gospel." Again they quote Scriptural passages to prove the necessity of repentance, all this time leaving you under the impression that their idea of repentance is the same as the Christian idea.

They follow this by stating: "We believe that baptism is the third principle of the Gospel, and that baptism is *for remission of sins*, as is taught in the Scripture. Here we differ a little from some denominations who teach that baptism is 'an outward sign of an inward grace.' In this particular we claim that we are right because we follow the Scriptures while other denominations have 'turned away from the truth unto fables.'" In this connection, they quote a number of passages which teach baptism and use the expression "*remission of sins*." They generally discuss one point at a time and dwell upon it until they feel that they have convinced the "*inquirer*" before they take up the next point. After having satisfied the one to whom they are talking that baptism is necessary and that it is for "the remission of sins," then they proceed: "We believe, moreover, that immersion is the only valid mode of baptism."

They then take up the next point by saying: "We believe that the doctrine of the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost is the fourth principle of the Gospel." In support of this so-called "principle" they quote Acts viii. 17, 18; Acts ix. 17, and Acts xix. 6. They here claim that the Holy Spirit cannot be received "as a gift" without the laying on of hands, and that these passages, interpreted in view of the context, so teach. If the "inquirer" happens to be sufficiently familiar with the Bible to quote Luke xi. 13, to show that *asking* is the only condition which

Christ requires for the receiving of the Holy Spirit or Acts ii. 3, 4, to show that there was no "laying on of hands" on the day of Pentecost; they explain away all these passages and any others of similar import.

Having made the above points all clear to one whom the "elders" are trying to reach, they then submit the proposition that neither baptism nor the laying on of hands will be of any avail unless the one administering these ordinances is duly authorized so to do.

They then undertake to prove that no one is authorized to teach, preach, or administer the ordinances except the Mormon priesthood. By their peculiar methods of interpreting Scripture, they "prove" that the Christian Church of old was to apostatize immediately after the apostolic age; and then by a similar use of history they "prove" that as a matter of fact the church did so apostatize, that the "dark ages" came on because of such apostasy, that the Reformation was merely an effort on the part of man to establish the Church of Christ, but was a failure because there was no revelation and no true prophet to lead in the work, and that there was no true church in the world from the ancient apostolic times to the days of Joseph Smith, who was duly "authorized" by prophecy and revelation, as of old, to reëstablish the true church in the world.

Hence, you see, that from the apparently innocent beginning with faith, repentance, baptism,

and the laying on of hands, they keep on until they reach the startling conclusion that there is no true church in all the world but the Latter-day Saints, or Mormon Church, as it is generally called.

If they can get you to accept this conclusion and join their church, in time they will, by precisely the same style of reasoning as above, lead you to believe that God is a polygamist, and that men may become gods by practicing this abomination. They will moreover by the same methods lead you to accept the Mormon priesthood as "the mouthpiece of God" whom you must "obey in all things, temporal as well as spiritual." They will thus enslave you and make you pay tithes for their support while they go around pretending to preach "without purse or scrip" in order to get more money out of those whom they are leading astray.

When the Mormon "elders" approach your door or invite you to their meetings, your only safety lies in remembering the words of Christ: "Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."

PHILADELPHIA, PA.,
December 27th, 1898.

MY DEAR SIR ;—

I have yours of 23d instant, and in answer I have to say that I think it of the highest importance to the public interest of morality and good government that the attempted revival of recognition of Polygamy in Utah and elsewhere should be opposed by every lawful means.

Any hesitation in respect to it on the part of the people or Congress will, under present circumstances, be almost equivalent to giving it affirmative support. I am, in haste,

Very respectfully,

(Signed) GEO. F. EDMUNDS.

The Rev. Josiah Strong.

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DIOCESAN HOUSE, NEW YORK,
December 29th, 1898.

MY DEAR DR. STRONG ;—

No one who knows Senator Edmunds can doubt that his judgment in regard to the matter of which you spoke to me the other day, must be both wise and just. Certainly the facts which you submitted to me make it of urgent importance that such action as is contemplated by the League for Social Service should be taken with all promptness and energy. Very faithfully yours,

(Signed) H. C. POTTER.

Rev. Josiah Strong, D. D.

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